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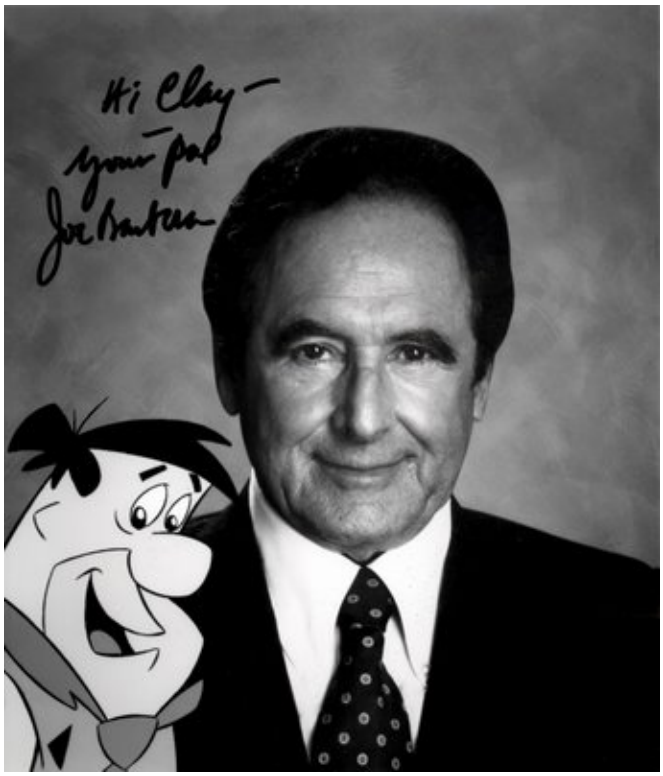
# arglebargle!

wednesday, december 20, 2006

## Adios Hollywood Joe (1911-2006)




This has been a bad year for losing people. I know I said that last year and the year before that, but this year has been especially bad. Alex Toth, Ed benedict and now Joe Barbera.
H-B in it's heyday was where any kid interested in animation in the 1960's wanted to work (in fact I'm told that master animator and historian Mark Kausler actually ran away from home at 16 to go to Hollywood and become an animator. He essentially ran away ...*to* Hanna-Barbera productions in L.A.).

## about me

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Animator, V/O Actor, Comics Artist, Archivist, Director, Collector, Writer, Historian, Painter, Packrat, Recluse, Hermit, Crank, Weirdo.

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I snapped this pic as I was driving by the old H-B Building on Cahuenga in the mid-90's. Production activity had dropped off to next to nothing by this point in time...But at least the building itself was still in use and both Bill and Joe were still walking it's halls. Now Bill's gone, Joe's gone, the building is gone and their names have all-but-disappeared from public daily viewing.

Well, unless you happen to be on Hollywood Boulevard...(or watching Boomerang, I guess). I love how even though I took this picture probably 15 years ago, light appears to be shining on Joe's name.

The Tom and Jerry team with its seven Academy Awards: animators Ed Barge and Irv Spence, layout man Dick Bickenbach, directors Joe Barbera and Bill Hanna, and animator Ken Muse.

The Tom and Jerry unit with the seven oscars the team garnered during their run on the original Tom and Jerry series. A moment frozen in time from Animation's golden age.
When I first came out to to LA it was the early 1990's and I was actually working on a Tom and Jerry project. The call for reference went out and a

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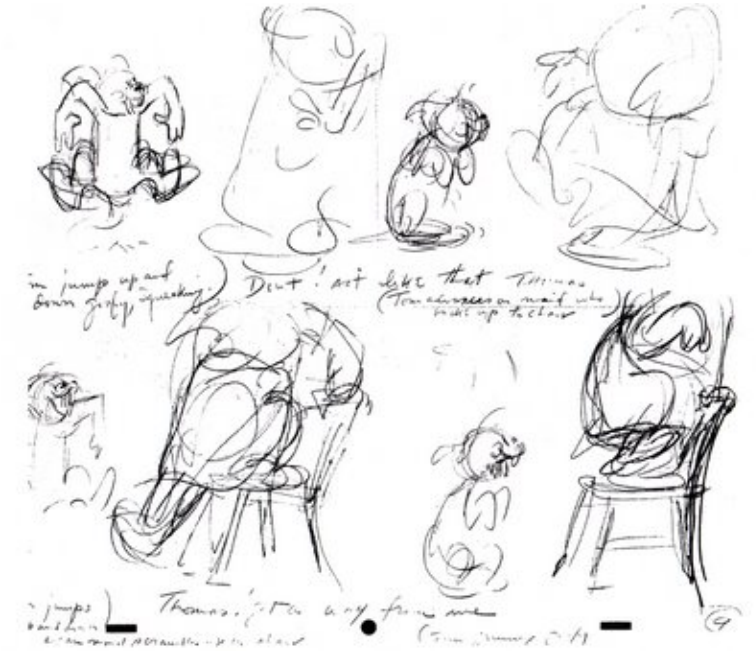
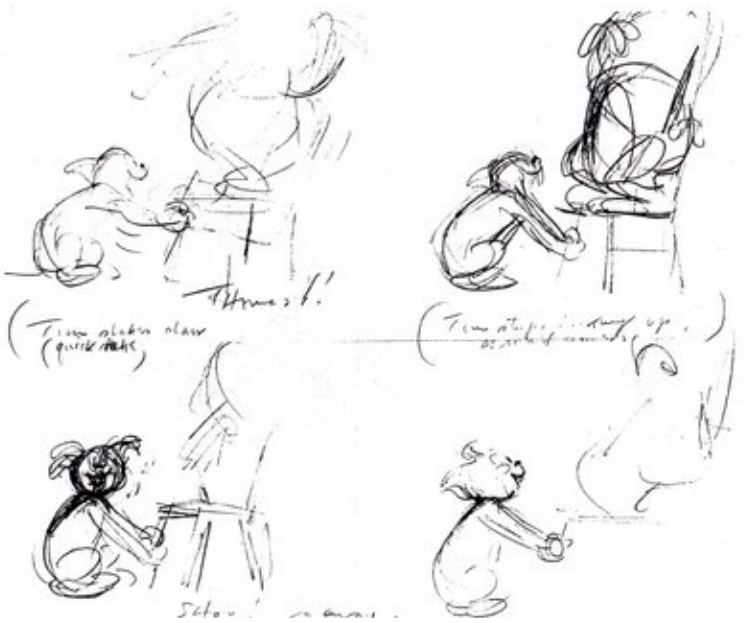
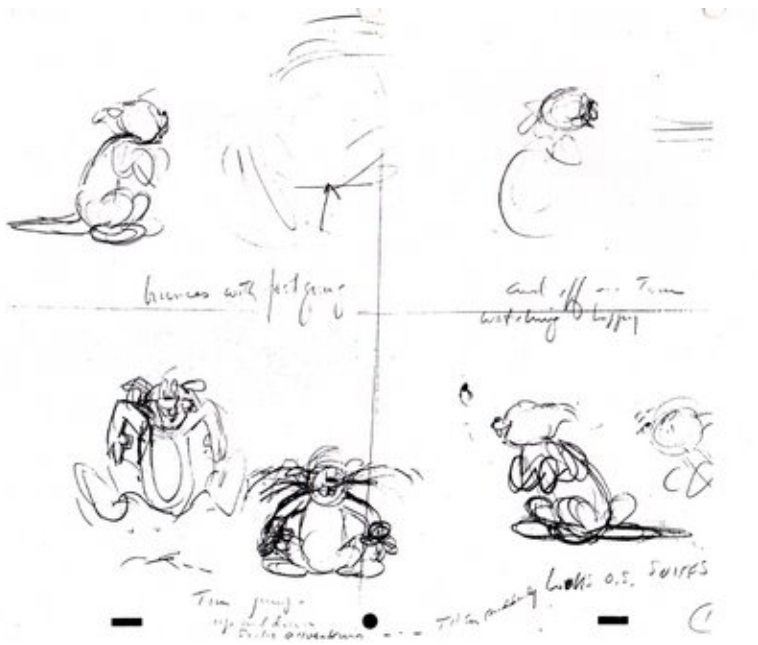
I Power Blogger

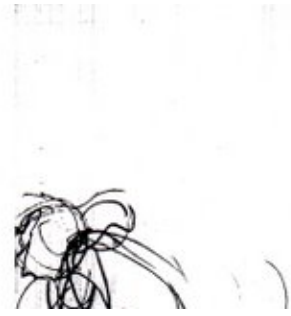
couple of things surfaced I hadn't expected...one was a rough storyboard for a good portion of *Nit-Witty Kitty* (1951) I was immediately struck by how both raw and totally on-target this short-hand board was. "Wow, who did these?" I got an answer I wan't expecting --"Joe Barbera". What?? Joe drew? I asked naively (up to that point I had always thought of Joe as more of a businessman than an artist). "Whaddaya mean? He drew great! Those are his story sketches" growled my peer, (a little aggravated by my ignorance) "He always knew EXACTLY what he wanted and he was able to translate it, as well as synthesize other ideas elequently for the layout guys." I didn't know it then, but I have since found out, it was true!
Here's a twelve-page example...
The Setup: Tom has experienced "a sharp blow to the head" while chasing Jerry and now he thinks he a mouse. Mammy Two-Shoes (having inadvertantly administered the blow) is distressed about Tom's condition...but the more he acts like a mouse, the more her *fear* of mice overrides her concern...

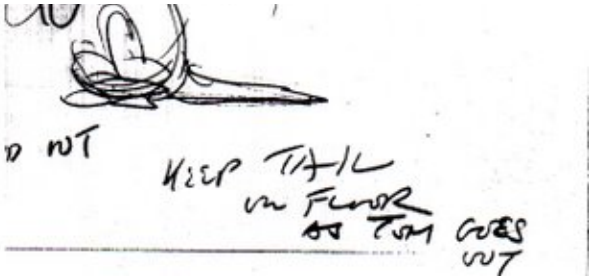


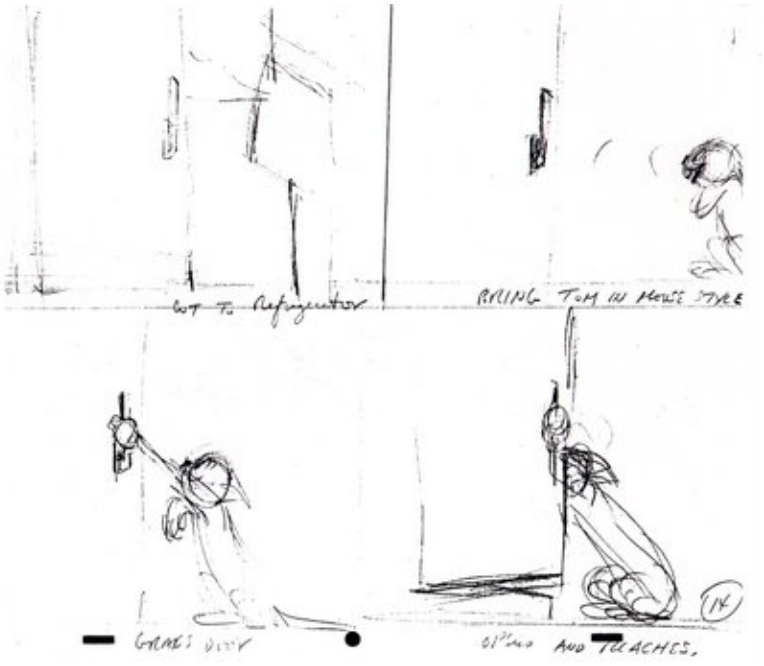


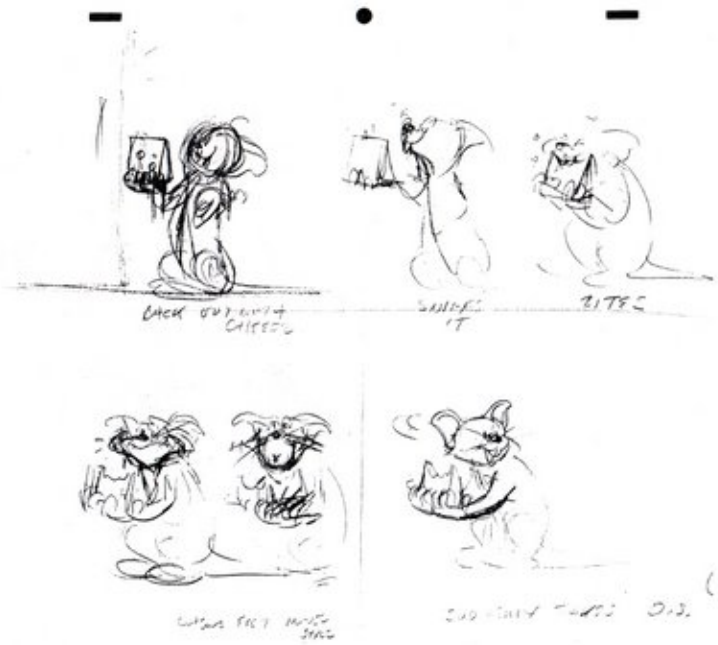
Thanks, Donut!





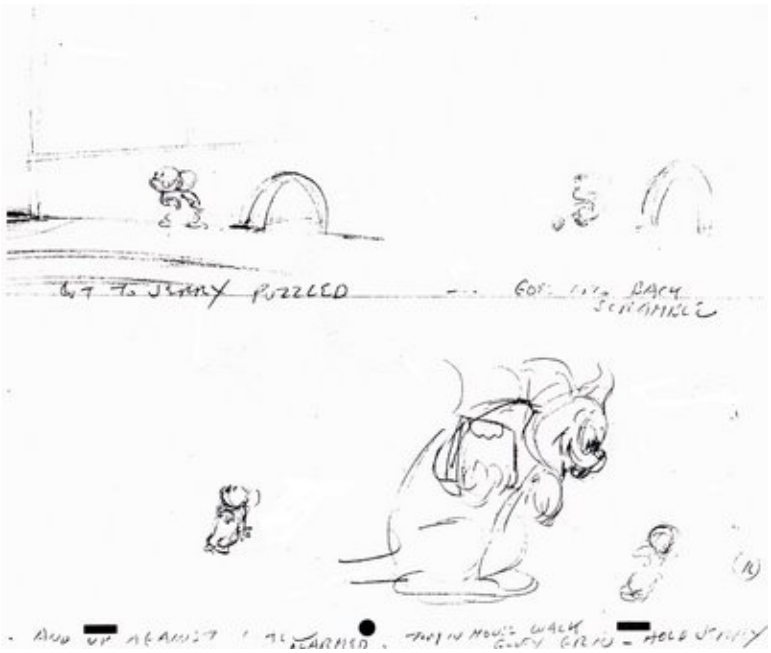


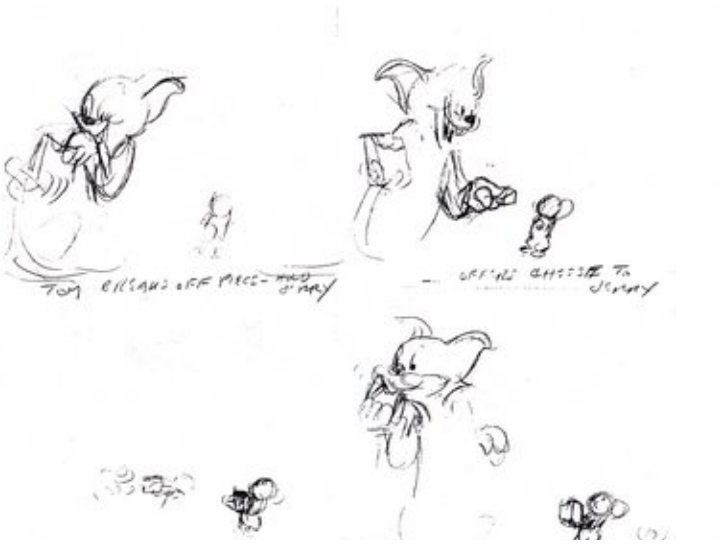



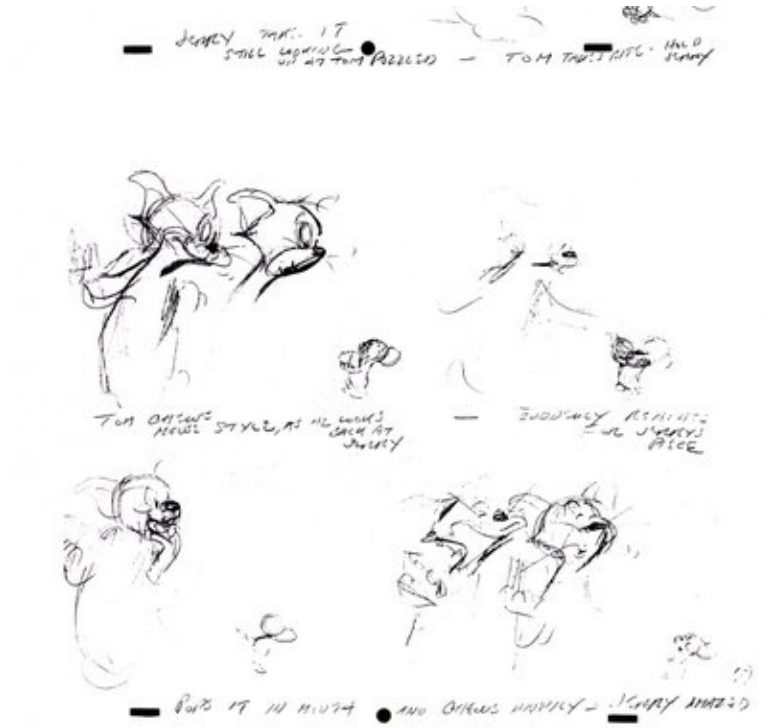
Check out this frame grab from the finished cartoon.
See how the close the attiude and

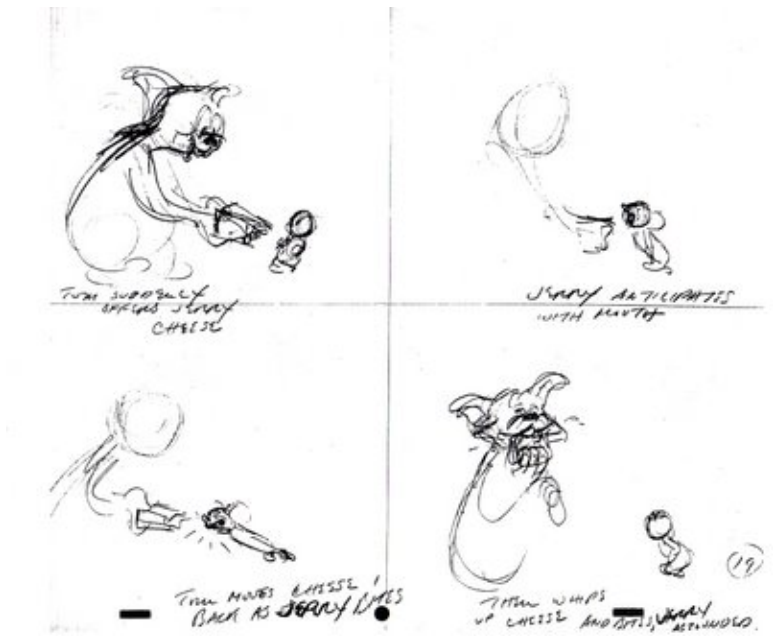
pose is to Joe's original sketch.

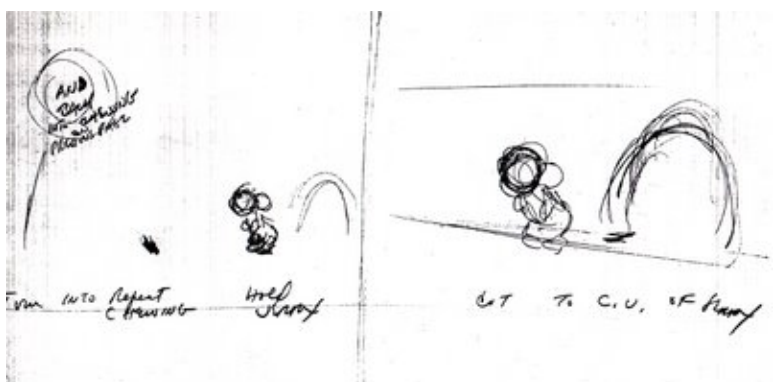


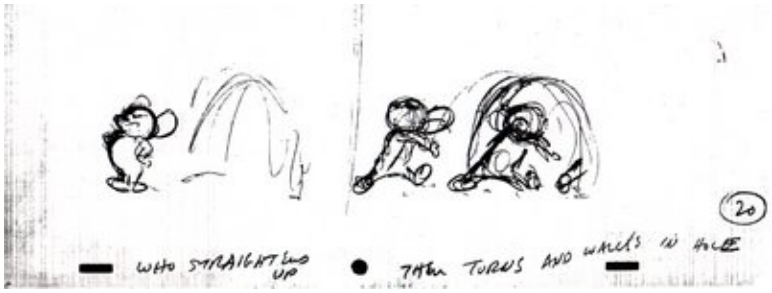

This one too...





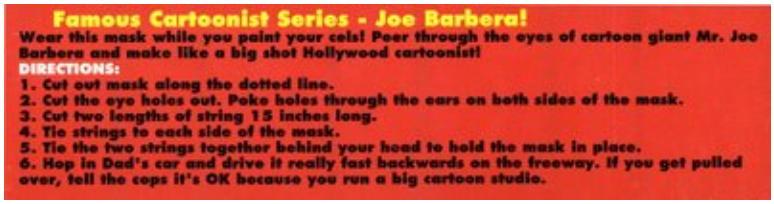







Yup...that plays just like the Tom and Jerry Cartoon alright.
Joe co-produced and directed hundreds of MGM cartoons before they ever made a penny off of television, the medium they created hundreds of animated programs for ...and what they're probably most remembered and revered (and lambasted) for. I have several posts planned around some old H-B shows coming up soon...so with that in mind, (and the original idea that I was going to TRY to keep this post short) I'm gonna jump all the way into the mid-1990s with sa little genuine (and long overdue) "Hollywood Joe" appreciation...

Now, here's the big lug as we know and love him. A meat-eatin', life-lovin', Pope-meetin', cartoon-makin' Maverick! His visage is featured here with pride... appearing as a cut-out mask on the back of the 1995 H-B/Spumco produced "Huckleberry Hound Show" cel painting kit box! Now if it only worked the mask in the movie *The Mask.*


**Famous Cartoonist Series - Joe Barbera!**
**Wear this mask while you paint your cels! Peer through the eyes of cartoon giant Mr. Joe Barbera and make like a big shot Hollywood cartoonist!**
**DIRECTIONS:**
**1. Cut out mask along the dotted line.**
**2. Cut the eye holes out. Poke holes through the ears on both sides of the mask.**
**3. Cut two lengths of string 15 inches long.**
**4. Tie strings to each side of the mask.**
**5. Tie the two strings together behind your head to hold the mask in place.**
**6. Hop in Dad's car and drive it really fast backwards on the freeway. If you get pulled over, tell the cops it's OK because you run a big cartoon studio.**

John K's unique instructions for proper Joe Barbera mask use and etiquette. Oddly --as I write this, John just appeared on *TV Land* talking about Joe and how the catch-phrase "Yabba Dabba Doo!" came to pass. It makes me realize more than ever just how many of us in the industry today are here because of Joe. The world today is a very different and more joyous place than it would 've been without him. Thanks again, Buddy!

Ladies and Gentlemen, Mr. Barbera has left the building. Good luck and Godspeed, Joe...
You'll be missed.

Thanks and best wishes for this post go out to the Barbera family, the extended Hanna-Barbera family, John Kricfalusi, Spumco, J. D. Suggs, J. Riechek, Leonard Maltin and Patrick Brion.

posted by c. martin croker at 5:25 pm | 4 comments

**saturday, december 16, 2006**

## The Fantasti-car revealed

So here's the first look at the long-awaited, Kirby-created, big-screen version of the FF's primary flying, firing and dividing vehicle "The Fantasti-car"...or at least a big chunk of it. Interesting here that *The Thing* isn't present for this photo-op...and it's kinda hard to tell for sure if there's a seat for him in this nutty gizmo or not. But here (most of ) it is, regardless! The other 3 lead actors from next summer's release are present, (Alba looking more like Sue from the comics here than the first film) all apparently posing for their FF2 action-figure photos...

It sure ain't no flyin' bathtub! ...Maybe a little "Flying Sub" from *Voyage to the Bottom of the Sea* in there though. (I still wish it had reflected more of Jolly Jack's original designs...oh well...)

posted by c. martin croker at 7:33 pm | 2 comments